

## **INDIVIDUALS, TEAMS IN TWO DIVISIONS COMPETE FOR GYMNASTICS STATE TITLES**

**THE CHAMPIONSHIPS:** The 54th Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Gymnastics State Championships will take place Friday-Saturday, March 1-2 at Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. The team championships in Divisions 1 and 2 will begin at noon. The individual championships will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday.

**TICKET INFORMATION:** Ticket prices for the State Gymnastics Championships are \$9 per day plus online fees, and they are available to be purchased on-line on the WIAA website through GoFan, the WIAA ticketing partner, at: <https://gofan.co/app/school/WIAA2?activity=Gymnastics>.

**HOW THEY QUALIFIED:** Ten teams will compete for the Division 1 and Division 2 team titles. The top two teams from each of the five sectionals in each division qualify for the meet. The top five individuals in each event and the top five all-arounders at each sectional qualify for the State individual championships.

**TEAM SCORING:** Team scores are compiled by adding the sum of the four best individual scores in each of the four events in the team competition.

**CHAMPIONSHIPS STREAMED LIVE:** All events of the State Gymnastics Championships will be streamed live and can be viewed with a subscription to the NFHS Network. To purchase a subscription to the live programming for only \$11.99 per month, log-on to [www.wiaa.tv](http://www.wiaa.tv) or [www.nfhsnetwork.com](http://www.nfhsnetwork.com) and click on the subscription button in the header of the page. Archived streams of the sessions will be available on demand on [www.nfhsnetwork.com](http://www.nfhsnetwork.com) 72 hours after the tournament.

**COMPETING TEAMS:** The 10 teams that will be competing for the team State championship in Division 1, with the number of times the programs have qualified for the team competition in parentheses, are Chippewa Falls/McDonell Catholic (2), Franklin/Muskego (3), Grafton/Cedarburg (6), Hartford (7), Homestead (26), Hudson (9), Janesville Craig (4), Oak Creek/Whitnall (1), Sun Prairie West/East (2) and Verona/Edgewood (12). The 10 teams competing in Division 2 are Ashland/Drummond/Mellen (3), Dodgeville/Highland/ Iowa-Grant/Mineral Point (1), Elkhorn (10), Medford/Colby (3), Mount Horeb (37), Onalaska/Luther (1), Reedsburg (8), West Bend West (8), West Salem/Aquinas/Bangor (6) and Whitefish Bay (28). There were 82 teams in the Tournament Series this year, including 41 in Division 1 and 41 in Division 2.

**TEAM TOURNAMENT HISTORY:** The WIAA has sponsored the State Gymnastics Championships since 1971. The event featured one division from 1971 through 1977. The State Tournament Series competition was divided into two divisions in 1978. In 2020, a change to cooperative team eligibility restricted co-op programs to a maximum of two schools or a combined enrollment of the co-op must be less than the enrollment

of the largest stand-alone program in each respective division. Whitefish Bay has won the most team championships with 11, which doesn't include two titles with Shorewood as a co-op. The Franklin/Muskego/Oak Creek/Whitnall co-op is second on the list of team titles won with eight. In addition, the Franklin/Muskego co-op added a team title in 2022. Waukesha West/North/South is next on the list with seven, and Mount Horeb and River Falls are fourth with six. Brookfield Central, De Pere and Nicolet have five titles. Addie Gallun of Whitefish Bay and Beth Weber of Whitefish Bay/Shorewood have won the most individual championships in meet history with 10. Gina Piazza of Fall River is next with eight, and Jenny Donar of Southwestern/Cuba City and Samantha Krueger of River Falls have won seven.

**LAST YEAR:** Verona/Edgewood captured its first Division 1 title by scoring a four-event score of 146.1167, and Franklin/Muskego finished runner-up with a score of 145.3167. Nicolet won the Division 2 championship with a score of 142.75. The West Salem/Aquinas/Bangor co-op finished in second place, scoring 138.0 points. Individually, Annika Rufenacht of Verona/Edgewood won the Division 1 all-around competition for the second year in a row, compiling a score of 38.1. Rufenacht also won the uneven bars competition with a score of 9.483. In addition, Rufenacht also tied teammate Denise Ta for the championship on the balance beam with a score of 9.517. Maggie Pokorny of Homestead was the champion in the vaulting competition with a score of 9.8, and she earned the top spot in the floor exercise with a performance scoring a 9.5. In Division 2, Cassi Hansen of Nicolet won the all-around with a score of 37.417. Hansen also won the uneven bars with a score of 9.6 and the floor exercise with the score of 9.433. Abby Roecker of Waupun captured the crown on the balance beam with a score of 9.267, and Avery Ash of Rice Lake was the champion in the vaulting competition with a score of 9.483.

**DIVISION 1 NOTEBOOK:** Three events return their champions from the State Championships last season seeking a repeat title this year. Senior Annika Rufenacht of Verona/Edgewood is the two-time returning champion in the all-around. She should again be among the top contenders in the event this year after winning the all-around and three events at her sectional last week. Also back is senior Kaylee Stoeger of Franklin/Muskego, who placed third in the all-around last year. She also won the all-around at her sectional last week. The other top all-arounds at sectionals were junior Ava Krista of Chippewa Fall/McDonell Catholic, who placed 15th at State last season; senior Gillian Hopkins of Homestead; and junior Erica Miner of Oak Creek/Whitnall, who placed sixth last season. Rufenacht is also the returning champion in the uneven bars after a runner-up finish in 2022. She's back for another chance at the title after winning the event at her sectional last week. Other medalists last season returning to compete for the title are senior Ellie Johnson of Franklin/Muskego, who was fourth last season, as well as Stoeger and Miner, who were fifth and sixth, respectively. Other sectional champions who may contend for a spot on the medals stand after winning sectional titles in the event this past weekend are Krista and Hopkins. Rufenacht and senior teammate Denise Ta return to the balance beam after sharing the crown last year. Their teammate at Verona/Edgewood, senior Anna Messner, and Johnson may also contend for the title on the beam after finishing fifth and sixth, respectively, last season.

Sectional champions that may challenge for a medal are senior Sam Burge of Mukwonago/Kettle Moraine after she finished 11th at State last year, junior Bella Perez Emory of Oconomowoc, freshman Annika Lee of Waunakee/DeForest, sophomore Maggie Lundstrom of Homestead and Krista. Although she is not the reigning champion in the vault, Rufenacht won the title in 2022 and was runner-up last season; so she should be considered a contender again this year. Other returners to the event that finished in the top six last year are Johnson, who finished tied for third last season, and Miner, who placed in a tie for fifth. Sectional champions in the vault other than those that finished in the top six last season that could be among the leaders this week are freshman Danika Parnell of La Crosse Logan/Central and Lundstrom. Stoeger, Burge and Rufenacht are the top returning individuals in the floor exercise after finishing second through fourth, respectively, in 2023. The trio also were medal winners in 2022. Rufenacht was runner-up; Stoeger was fourth; and Burge finished fifth. Additional qualifying sectional champs aiming for finishes among the leaders are Hopkins and Krista.

**DIVISION 2 NOTEBOOK:** There are two returning event champions from the State Championships last season seeking a repeat title this year. Junior Abby Roecker of Waupun is the top returning gymnast in the all-around after finishing runner-up last year and fourth in 2022. She will be among the leading candidates to win the event this year as will junior Kaylee Frank of Elkhorn, who was third a year ago. Junior Avery Ash of Rice Lake and junior Isabell Korn of Westby/Cashton/De Soto/Viroqua are also back after placing fifth and sixth last year, respectively. Roecker is one of the two returning champions. She is back in the balance beam after earning the crown last year and placing third in 2022. Among the experienced returning competitors in the balance beam are Ash, who was runner-up to Roecker last year, and senior Ryann Wesley of Whitefish Bay, who was third last season and fourth in 2022. Senior Melanie Princl of West Bend West also earned a spot on the award stand last year with a sixth-place finish. Champions at sectionals last weekend, which weren't referenced earlier, who may contend for a title in the balance beam are junior Kate Krauklis of Elkhorn and freshman Raylin Rothmeier of Medford/Colby. Ash is the other returning champion, earning glory last season in the vault after tying for third place in 2022. Among the experienced gymnasts expected to challenge Ash are senior Ezzy Mauermann of Nicolet, who finished third last season and tied for sixth in 2022; senior Madilyn Fisher of Prairie du Chien/Fennimore, who tied for fourth in 2023 and was third in 2022; senior Morgan Siekert of West Salem/Aquinas/Bangor, who tied Fisher for fourth last year and was fifth in 2022; and senior Emily Cracker of Reedsburg, who was sixth. Sectional champions with their sights on contending for a title in the vault are senior Olivia Price of Bloomer/Colfax and Frank. Frank should also be considered a contender in the floor exercise as the top returning medalist in the event after last season's runner-up finish. Others with State experience that may challenge her for the title is Frank's senior teammate Jenna Heindselman, who placed fifth in 2023, and Princl, who was sixth. Seniors Kyla Krause of Medford/Colby, Makayla Cibulka of West Bend West and Siekert are qualifiers that won their sectionals and could be among the leaders in the floor exercise standings. Frank is the highest ranking finisher in the uneven bars returning from the 2023 State Championships with a runner-up performance. Cracker

finished third after she was runner-up in 2022. Other possible contenders for the crown in the uneven bars are sophomore Gabrielle Bjorkman of Sparta, Cibulka, Korn and Krause based on their sectional championship last weekend.

**FOLLOW STATE MEET ON SOCIAL MEDIA:** Receive updates of the State Gymnastics Tournament on the WIAA State Tournament Twitter account [@wiaawistate](#) with the hashtag [#wiaagym](#). Also like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram at [wiaawi](#).

**NEED THE QUALIFIERS?:** All participants and rotations of qualifying teams and individuals are available on the WIAA website. Access the gymnastics tournament homepage and select the State Tournament Information section, or log-in to the restricted media area of the site and access the information in the State Tourney Information in the center section.

**NEED RESULTS?:** The quickest way to attain results will be to access the Tournament Information section from the gymnastics homepage on the WIAA website.

**NEED CREDENTIALS?:** Requesting media credentials for the 2024 WIAA Gymnastics Championships must be done by noon Tuesday, Feb. 27. Complete and submit the online credential request form found in the restricted media area of the WIAA website. Verification of approved credentials is also available in the restricted media area. Please verify approval of credentials for your media outlet and contact the WIAA with any credential concerns prior to the start of the respective tournaments.

**MEDIA PARKING:** General admission parking is available at Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln High School. Enter the school off of 16th Street South. Enter through the south main entrance (Doors "JJ"). The parking fee is \$5 per vehicle.

**STATE MEET INFORMATION ONLINE:** Information, including rotations, for 2024 State Gymnastics Tournament is available online for the media in the restricted area of the WIAA Media Center. Access the gymnastics option on the State Tournament Info. page linked in the menu on the Media Center.

**STATE GYMNASTICS APPAREL:** WIAA licensed apparel will be available at Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln High School during the tournament. Apparel is also available online following the 2024 State Gymnastics Tournament. The link to the online store can be found in the Gymnastics Tournament page when it becomes available.

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